



Groom Construction recognizes the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion within its corporate team and vendor/subcontractor partnerships. Diversity equity and inclusion across all areas of our business is a civic responsibility and a value proposition. It increases workforce engagement, productivity, and overall performance, creating a nimble, highly successful workplace. Groom believes that creating such an environment leads to better service to its clients while building the economic wealth of the communities Groom and its clients serve. To this end Groom has continually worked to recruit, retain, and advance a diverse workforce and create an environment of inclusivity. In addition, Groom has increased efforts to develop and include small and diverse businesses in its subcontractor procurement and overall project and corporate spending.

Groom employs over two hundred employees, 46% percent of whom are non-Caucasian, female and/or veterans. Of this group, 26% have worked their way from laborers/fixture installers to leads and superintendents. Groom has had success with employee referrals for recruitment. This has resulted in the Groom team being comprised of many families including husbands, wives, sons, daughters, brothers, and cousins, thus expanding Groom's diverse workforce by both color and gender. Groom has a successful employee referral program, awarding bonuses to employees who refer candidates who are hired and employed by Groom for a set period. Currently Groom has 27 employees employed through this employee referral program.

Groom recognizes that women make up less than ten percent of the construction workforce in Massachusetts. To reconcile this imbalance, Groom continues to support the hiring and promotion of women. Currently 30% of Groom's project management positions are held by women. This is up from the previous year's 26%. Additionally, women hold two of Groom's seven-member executive committee positions at the Vice President and Senior Vice President levels.

To improve its workforce and enhance its employees' career path, Groom offers training and certifications prior to deployment or in the construction downtime. This includes OSHA-10, lull, scissor and forklift training and certification, Covid Competency Certification as well as individual trade classes. To lay a foundation for the less experienced employees to build on, Groom utilizes mentorship. Employees will begin their learning in the field and move to a boneyard tour of duty and on to a number two position under a superintendent until they are ready to lead on their own. Training, certification, and mentorship also extends into the office, where office personnel are encouraged to take continuing education and certification courses at the company

expense. In an effort to further develop workforce engagement and increase customer satisfaction, Groom holds periodic customer specific GC/FC training programs. In addition to mechanical skills refinement, this training includes administrative processes such as delivery and inventory tracking systems and project management tools.

Groom focuses recruitment efforts on job fairs, attending vocational schools and veteran sponsored events. Groom also increased its recruiting efforts in areas with a more diverse population through advertising via QR code posters. This allows interested candidates to apply for positions via their smart phones. Paper applications and application drop boxes are also provided in these areas.

Groom has taken steps to encourage growth in the construction industry. Throughout the course of the year Groom hires interns from local co-op programs and area colleges. In 2022 Groom employed seven interns, both men and women, five of whom are studying majors unrelated to construction. Also, a Groom Construction senior manager serves on the Salem High School Career Technical Education advisory committee with the aim of guiding curriculum to prepare the next generation of the construction workforce.

To ensure Groom promotes an inclusive pool of job applicants, all open position postings include the following language:

Groom is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status.

To help build diversity in the construction industry and attract young people to the field Groom offers construction related scholarships. The first scholarship, the **Groom Construction Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Scholarship (DE&I)** is aimed at attracting individuals to the construction field from historically underrepresented demographics such as women, and people of Hispanic, Black, and Asian backgrounds. Groom realizes the importance of attracting individuals from more diverse backgrounds to the construction industry for the overall health and success of the industry. The second scholarship, the **Groom Construction Management Scholarship** is for any individual entering the construction management field through an academic track.

Long term Groom must continue to expose a younger generation to the construction industry and plans to do so utilizing its relationship with the local high schools and active marketing of the career opportunities in construction on social media platforms frequented by young people.

For several years Groom Construction has been growing its database of diverse subcontractors and suppliers to provide these businesses the opportunity to bid on

Groom projects. This growth has been achieved through searching state and local supplier diversity databases, Section 3 databases, attendance at diverse supplier matchmaking events and memberships in trade organizations along with corporate membership of nonprofits such as the Center for Women & Enterprise and the National Minority Supplier Development Council.

Several of Groom's usual vendor/subcontractor meet the definition of diverse business enterprise; however, they are either unfamiliar with certification or put off by the cost and paperwork involved. Groom will continue to educate and offer administrative support in the certification process. Groom also offers the financial incentive of covering the initial cost of certification. In addition, Groom alters its payment terms to diverse subcontractors and suppliers, making payment faster than the typical 30 days if Groom feels such shortened payment terms will encourage project participation.

On a quarterly basis, Groom tracks its Tier II diverse subcontractor/supplier project spending for several retail clients. Diverse subcontractor/supplier includes businesses 51% owned and controlled by people of color, women, veterans, disabled veterans, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Additionally, Groom is required to hit project spend targets for its affordable housing clients that include diverse sub/suppliers and Section 3 businesses. These affordable housing clients also require workforce development programs that ensure a certain percentage of the total workforce hours of the project are represented by woman and people of color. Before hiring any potential subcontractor for these projects, Groom assesses these subcontractors' ability to meet the workforce development goals. Groom also promotes these projects and employment opportunities around the jobsite location and at targeted locations such as community centers and MassHire offices.

Groom will continue to promote subcontractor development by analyzing a project's scope and identifying where there is a notable lack of diversity, locate potential diverse subcontractors and aim to engage them on all the projects within their region to further grow their business.

Groom measures its success and its overall diversity wellness by meeting its clients' diversity goals and expectations; training and promoting from within the company with emphasis on the career growth of those typically underrepresented in construction; and supporting the success of diverse businesses. Groom Construction is fully committed to creating a work environment, both internally and externally, in which all employees and partners feel respected, valued, and offered an opportunity to grow.